

Community Benefits Advisory Committee (CBAC)

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 22, 2021, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Held Virtually Via Zoom

Present: Flor Amaya, Walter Armstrong, Elizabeth (Liz) Browne, Tina Chery, Alexandra Chery Dorrelus, Shondell Davis, Lauren Gabovitch, Richard Giordano, Nancy Kasen, Barry Keppard, Phillomin Laptiste, Angie Liou, Danelle Marable, Kelly McCarthy, Sandy Novack, Holly Oh, MD, Jane Powers, Melody Route-Satchell, Anna Spier, Robert Torres, LaShonda Walker-Robinson, Fred Wang

Absent: James Morton, Alex Oliver-Dávila, Joanne Pokaski, Triniese Polk, Richard Rouse

Guests: Annie Rushman, Health Resources in Action (HRiA), Senior Associate

One member of the public was also in attendance.

Welcome

Nancy Kasen, Vice President, Community Benefits and Community Relations, Beth Israel Lahey Health (BILH), welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for joining. Nancy then reviewed the agenda.

Nancy welcomed Melody Route-Satchell, a Practice Manager at BIDMC, as a new member to the Community Benefits Advisory Committee (CBAC).

Nancy also welcomed Alexandra Chery Dorrelus, the Director of Programs and Training at The Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, as a new member to the CBAC. Nancy thanked Tina Chery for her service on the CBAC.

Nancy then informed the CBAC that Dr. Holly Oh was transitioning off of the committee and thanked her for her service to The Dimock Center and the CBAC. She also mentioned that Kira Khazatsky, the Chief Operating Officer at JVS, would be joining the CBAC at the next meeting to fill the role previously held by Jerry Rubin.

The minutes from the March 23rd CBAC meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Public Comment Period

There were no oral or written public comments shared during this meeting.

Community-based Health Initiative (CHI) Updates

Housing Investment:

Nancy began the discussion by noting that in 2019, Dr. Megan Sandel from Boston Medical Center (BMC) presented to the CBAC about the Innovative Stable Housing Initiative (ISHI). ISHI consists of three funding streams: Flex Fund, Upstream Fund, and Resident-led Fund. The ISHI fund was established with initial commitments from BMC, Boston Children's Hospital, and Brigham and Women's Hospital (BMC and Boston Children's investments were made under previous Determination of Need guidelines).

As part of the Determination of Need CHI submission, BIDMC, at the recommendation of the CBAC, planned to invest \$1 million in the ISHI over 5 years (\$750,000 to the Flex Fund and \$250,000 to the

Upstream Fund). BIDMC has been working collaboratively with ISHI since 2019 to learn more about ISHI's governance structure, current investments, and future plans. Nancy reminded the CBAC that BIDMC feels a significant responsibility to be good stewards of the NIB CHI funds and is committed to having as much of the funding as possible reach the end beneficiaries (residents).

Robert Torres, Director of Community Benefits, Boston Region, BILH, then reviewed the initial findings from the Flex Fund, which were intended as housing stability funds of last resort (i.e., for use if someone was unable to access any other rental assistance funding). He shared how the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly changed the landscape of flexible rental assistance funding for residents of Massachusetts. Due to COVID-19, the needs have increased substantially; local, state, and federal funding have all been augmented significantly as a result. For instance, Rental Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT), had a maximum contribution of \$4,000 prior to COVID-19 and has since increased their maximum contribution to \$10,000. Programs like Emergency Rental and Mortgage Assistance (ERMA) and the federal housing stability fund Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) were formed as well. The City of Boston and philanthropic funding sources have also been created to meet the increased demand for rental assistance. Governor Baker has also announced plans to invest approximately \$1 billion to increase affordable housing and home ownership among those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result of these unanticipated changes, several of ISHI's Flex Fund grantees did not spend all of their awarded funds during the grant period and requested no-cost extensions. The ISHI Planning Committee is currently working on finalizing their plans to modify the Flex Fund; one of the initial proposed recommendations is to increase the allowable amount for administrative costs from 25% to 40%.

Robert also shared that the Upstream Fund had distributed funds to a diverse array of coalitions and seemed to be meeting its aims. In particular, the Upstream Fund had successfully fostered a learning community that was making a real positive impact.

Robert then presented potential paths forward for consideration and discussion by and with the CBAC regarding the BIDMC existing NIB CHI ISHI investment: maintaining the planned ISHI investment, investing in a Healthy Neighborhood Equity Fund (or similar fund), rolling the funds into the next Community-based Health Initiative (CHI) Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2023, or making a targeted investment in a specific development(s). He shared initial thoughts on the various strengths and risks related to these different investments, including ability to leverage additional resources, alignment with BIDMC's Community Benefits Service Area, and the likely level of oversight that BIDMC's Allocation Committee would have. BIDMC's recommendation was also to maintain the previous commitment of \$250,000 for the Upstream Fund. A robust discussion ensued.

CBAC members discussed various options and asked clarifying questions related to the timeline, process, and potential options. One member suggested increasing the amount of funding for the ISHI Upstream Fund from \$250,000 to \$500,000. Another member suggested a "blended" approach that would allocate funding to multiple specific projects. Several members noted the value of having oversight over the funding to be able to monitor and report on impact to key stakeholders.

Voting

The CBAC then took two sequential votes on how to proceed based on the options that had been proposed and discussed. The CBAC first voted on whether to allocate an additional \$250,000 to the ISHI Upstream Fund to make the total investment \$500,000. A motion for this allocation was made and seconded. The CBAC unanimously voted for the increased allocation to the ISHI Upstream Fund.

Anna Spier, Manager of Community Benefits, BIDMC, then launched an anonymous poll with three response options for how to invest the remaining \$500,000 in housing funds: investing in one specific project, the “blended” approach of making several smaller investments, or investing the funds back into the next round of the CHI RFP. The majority of respondents (62%) selected the option to invest the funds in the next round of the RFP, while 23% and 16% chose the focused investment and multiple investment options, respectively. The members were asked if they wanted to continue the discussion or take a vote; the CBAC decided to proceed with a vote on the RFP option. A motion for this allocation was made and seconded. The CBAC unanimously voted to allocate the remaining \$500,000 in housing funds previously allocated to the ISHI Flex Fund to the following CHI RFP cycle.

BIDMC reiterated that pending dialogue with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the recommendation of the CBAC is to move \$500,000 that was previously earmarked for the Flex Fund to the next CHI RFP funding cycle in 2023 and move \$250,000 to ISHI’s Upstream Fund (increasing the total allocation to the Upstream Fund to \$500,000).

Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative:

Anna shared a brief update on the Bowdoin/Geneva and Fenway/Kenmore Community Collectives that were selected through the first round of BIDMC’s Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative. The Collectives are new coalitions that have come together to facilitate a community-led process and represent a diverse array of organizations and residents.

The Collectives have begun planning their community engagement efforts, with technical assistance from John Snow, Inc. and independent evaluation support from a small business owned by a woman of color (MXM Research Group). The Collectives will develop a project and evaluation plan over the summer using information gathered during community engagement activities and start their projects as early as September 2021.

Community-based Health Initiative (CHI) Evaluation Overview

Anna then reviewed highlights from the evaluation of the CHI conducted by Health Resources in Action. In general, CBAC members were satisfied with the transparency of the meetings and the outreach conducted, and agreed that the funding opportunities were responsive to community needs in light of COVID-19. Several members also noted some of the drawbacks of holding meetings virtually, such as the difficulty of simultaneously participating in the meeting and viewing meeting materials, though others appreciated the convenience of meeting remotely.

Anna also shared planned improvements based on the evaluation results, such as tailored onboarding for new members, reviewing the charter annually, and making CBAC meetings more interactive. Next, Anna went over the strengths and opportunities for improvement reported by the Allocation Committee members and shared the changes that would be implemented moving forward.

CT Scanner Determination of Need (DoN) Update

Nancy shared that the DoN application for a new CT scanner was submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) in May 2021. The CT scanner will enable back-up imaging capability on BIDMC’s East Campus and improve patient access. The total amount of the CHI for this DoN is \$239,769.40. Pending approval by DPH, these funds will be rolled over into the current CHI priority allocations (Note: DPH approval received on June 24, 2021).

FY22 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Implementation Strategy (IS)

Robert provided an update on the FY22 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Implementation Strategy (IS). Every not-for-profit hospital undertakes the CHNA and IS process every three years. For this cycle, key strategies include: evidence-based community engagement strategies that recognize the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain communities, applying a racial equity lens and using an asset-based approach, focused data collection, increasing the time allotted for prioritization, and aligning efforts across the BILH system.

Robert also provided an overview of the planning process, how information will flow between key stakeholders, and the timeline with key milestones. The CBAC then discussed specific organizations and individuals that could help support efforts to engage the “hardly reached” focus populations for the CHNA and IS. CBAC members provided specific outreach suggestions verbally and via the Zoom chat function and Robert mentioned that additional input could be sent after the meeting. He also shared how BIDMC would be collaborating with other regional CHNA/IS efforts with the goal of streamlining efforts and minimizing the burden on communities.

Beth Israel Lahey Health (BILH) Updates

Nancy shared that Juan Fernando Lopera recently joined BILH as the new Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer. Juan will be overseeing the implementation of BILH’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Roadmap. Nancy then reviewed the recent food security and housing stability investments BILH made in the gateway municipality of Brockton. These investments were made in close collaboration with the City of Brockton.

Danelle Marable, Director of Evaluation and Data, Community Benefits and Community Relations, BILH, introduced herself and provided information about a series of evaluation capacity building workshops she is offering to programs and organizations that BILH supports. CBAC members are also encouraged to attend. The workshops are intended to improve program planning and increase outcome measurement. The program also helps address an equity issue—many smaller organizations do not have access to funds to support evaluation capacity building yet are expected to report on progress. More information about the workshops, including links to the recordings of the sessions that have already taken place, will be provided after the meeting.

Adjourn

BIDMC will send a reminder email to any CBAC member that has not yet completed their Conflict of Interest forms. Nancy thanked the attendees for joining the meeting and reminded everyone that the next scheduled meeting is September 28, 2021 from 5-7 pm. The 2022 meeting schedule was also shared.